

EARLY ISLAMIC QIBLAS

A SURVEY OF ISLAMIC MOSQUES
FROM 1 AH (622 C.E.)
TO 263 AH (876 C.E.)

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DAN GIBSON

Early Islamic Qiblas

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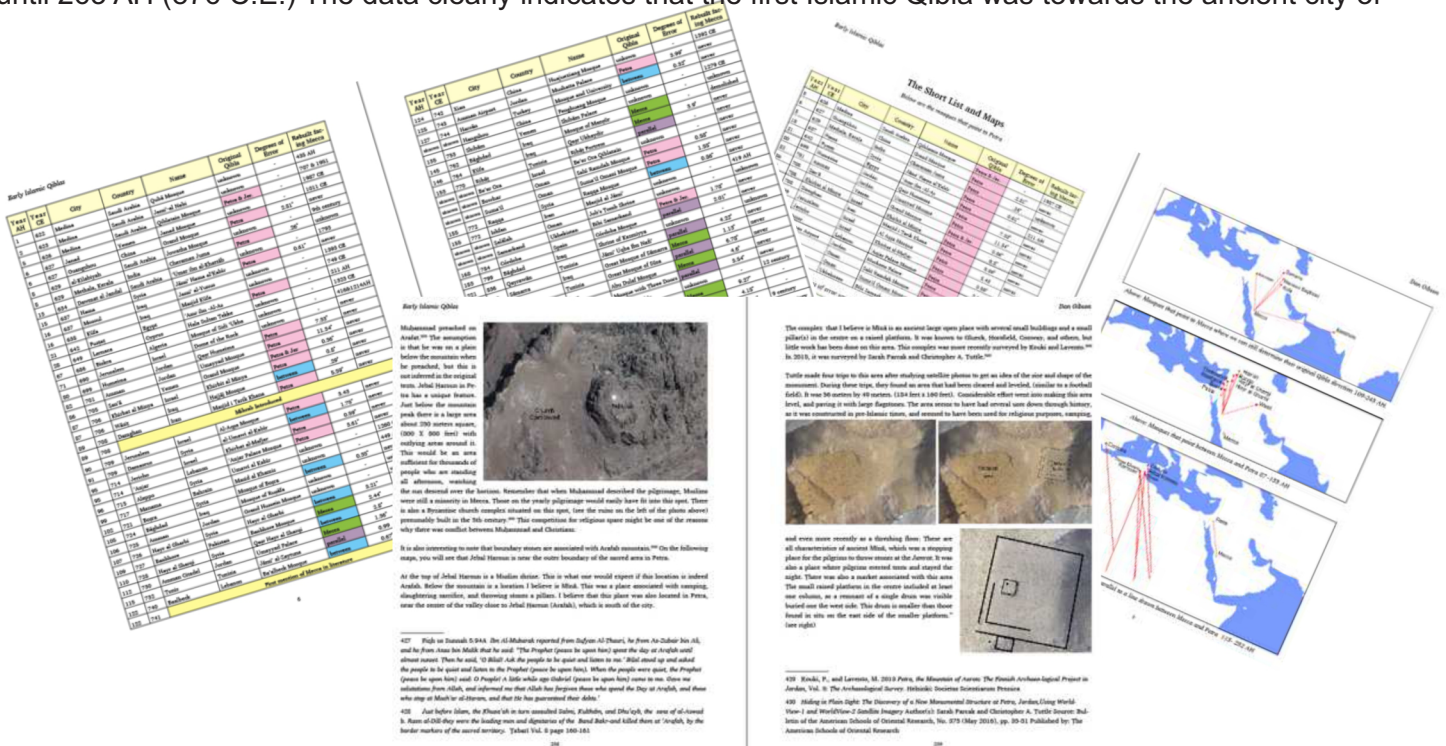
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Muslims have always been taught that the city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia is the center place of Islam. This city contains the Black Stone, the Forbidden Gathering Place, the Holy Mosque, and the Ka'aba building. Every Muslims, all over the world, no matter what sect of Islam, faces the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia when he or she prays. This direction of prayer is called the "Qibla." It is a vital part of Islamic ritual prayer, pilgrimage, halal meat, and even plays a part in how buildings and washrooms are designed (so that the faithful will not expose themselves towards the holy city.)

For centuries Muslim scholars and historians have believed that there were a few ancient mosques that got the Qibla direction wrong, so Muslims today check their smart phones to make doubly sure that they are praying in the right direction.

Now, shocking new archeological evidence clearly demonstrates that early Islamic mosques were not erroneously oriented as previously thought. Using modern technology and satellite imaging, Canadian historian Dan Gibson has discovered that early Islamic mosques were oriented to four different places. And they are not where Islam expects them to be.

In this book Gibson presents a survey of 63 Qiblas of Islamic mosques from the founding of Islam (622 C.E.) until 263 AH (876 C.E.) The data clearly indicates that the first Islamic Qibla was towards the ancient city of



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Gibson goes on to explain why there has been misunderstanding about the Qibla direction for over a thousand years, and then in detail describes how the ancient Arabs could accurately determine their Qiblas. Gibson then presents fifty supporting arguments, drawing from Islamic literature, history, geography, Hadiths and the Qur'an to support his argument. This book clearly challenges our understanding of Islamic history and paints an entirely different picture of how Islam emerged.

Will you join the growing crowds of people who believe that Muslims got it wrong, and that they are following the teachings of the Abbasids who came some two hundred years after the prophet Muhammad?

Also check out O'Rourke, *Walking and Talking in Nomadic and Urban Cultures*

This book contains footnotes, charts, maps, and photographs. Now you can check Gibson's claims and examine the evidence and decide for yourself.

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Possible Original Petra Pilgrimage

From right to left as set out by Muḥammad in Tabari vol. 9 page 14



Day 2 (9th Dhu al-Hijja)

Leave Mina and go to Jebel 'Arafah
Climb to the high shelf then keep the vigil (wuquf)
Descend 'Arafat through the Muzdalifa to the Dhu al-Hulaifa camping spot
Collect stones and stay over night (Total 7-8 kms)

Day 3 (10th Dhu al-Hijja)

Go to Mina - Stone the largest pillar (Jamrat al-'Aqaba)
Travel from Mina to Ka'ba and circle it.
Pass seven times between the hills of Safa and Marwa
Return from Ka'ba to Mina - Stay for two or three nights (Total 7 - 8 kms)

Using ishārāt or "local guides"

Let's go back to Ka'b who is standing on the temple mount in Jerusalem. The first thing he would do is take a reading of the North Star, or the "basic measurement." All other measurements follow this one. The Arabs understood that when they traveled directly north, the pole star would rise at a steady rate. The when they traveled south the North Star would drop at a steady rate. They also knew that if they traveled at an angle, towards any of the 32 akhnām points, that the pole star would rise or drop at different rates. These rates were called rhumb, and they had names and measurements for each of the 32 akhnām. The distance traveled on any rhumb that changed the Pole Star by 1ṣba' was called a tifrā.



Right Jebel Haroun is the peak that overlooks Petra.

...ber, caravan masters were not trying to map the world. They did not care about longitude and ... They had one objective: to find their way across trackless deserts towards a city or watering point ... over the horizon.



Once he knew where he was by measuring ṣba' and zāms, he had a multitude of tools available to him. For instance, by scanning the horizon, he would look for any landmarks that could be seen by someone in Jerusalem as well as someone in Petra. For instance, the left photo above demonstrates that from Mount Nebo one can see many places in the land of Israel. On a clear day, I have seen Jerusalem from this spot.

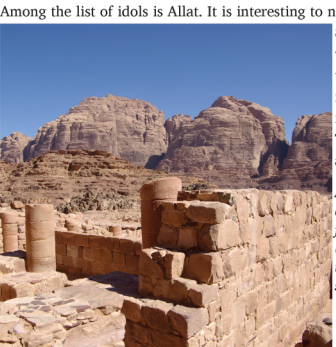
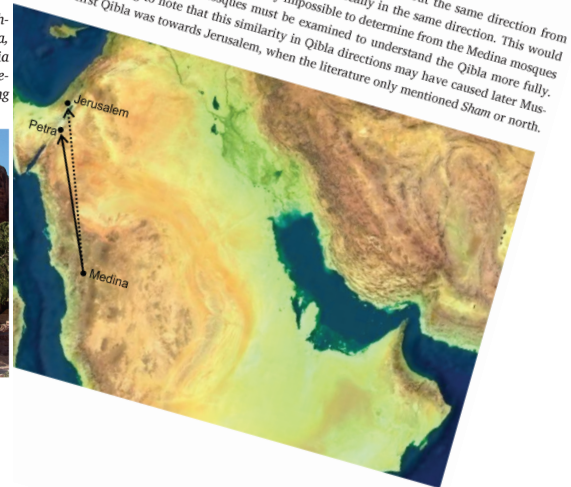
While Ka'b could not see Petra he could see as far as the Judean mountains. And he could ... the southern horizon using the stars on ... which stars

Early Islamic Qiblas

Narrated Ibn Umar: While some people were offering Fajr prayer at Qubā mosque, someone came to them and said, "Qur'ānic literature" has been revealed to Allah's Apostle tonight, and he has been ordered to face the Ka'ba: therefore you people should face it." Their faces were then towards Sham, so they turned towards the Ka'ba.²³⁷

Narrated Abdullah bin Umar: While the people were at Qubā offering the morning prayer, suddenly a person came to them saying, "Tonight Divine Inspiration has been revealed to Allah's Apostle and he has been ordered to face the Ka'ba: therefore you people should face it." Their faces were then towards Sham, so they turned towards the Ka'ba.²³⁸

Narrated Anas: None remains of those who prayed facing both Qiblas except myself.²³⁹



Many gods in Petra were represented by a square cut block. In the beytel to the right we can see three gods within one larger god, corresponding to Sura 53:19-20 "Have you thought upon al-Lat, and al-Uzza and al-Manat, the third, the other?" This beytel is found along the siq entrance to Petra.



237 Book of Idols, translated from Arabic version by Hishām Ibn al-Kalbi by Nabih Amin Faris, 1952
238 Wadi Rum Photo: Berthold Werner, GNU Free Documentation License
239 Ibn Hishām 78

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New archeological evidence clearly demonstrates that early Islamic mosques were not erroneously oriented as previously thought. Using modern technology and satellite imaging, Canadian historian Dan Gibson has discovered that early Islamic mosques were oriented to four different places. And they are not where Islam expects them to be.

For the first time in history Dan Gibson has undertaken a comprehensive survey of Islamic mosques from the first two centuries of Islam. Using this data, Gibson demonstrates that Muhammad and the first four caliphs all prayed towards a different place! This location was also the focus of their pilgrimage. Gibson believes that Muslims are disobeying their prophet by focusing their prayers on a Black Stone in Saudi Arabia, when the Qur'an commands them to face the original location.

This book contains all of the data behind the documentary film *The Sacred City*. Viewers of this film can now check the background data for themselves and investigate further arguments that were not included in the film. Complete with hundreds of images, charts, maps and footnotes, this volume clearly challenges traditionally held Islamic history.

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